



BEULAH

## CROSSROADS



The  
monthly newsletter  
of  
Beulah URC  
January 2021

*Dear Friends,*

**S**o we have survived 2020. We managed to make it through months in lockdown, the relief of summer time, and find ways to celebrate Christmas. We had birthdays in gardens and parties on Zoom. We've embraced new technological skills simply to keep in touch. What a year it has been.

Now we have stepped tentatively into a new year—we cling to hope that this year will be different; that we will soon be free of some of the restrictions of 2020; that we may be able to share more time with more people. We hope that we can return to some of our beloved activities and our church buildings; hope for less stress and anxiety.

As we enter this new year, we also face challenges. Some of our challenges are personal. They may centre around jobs. They may be based in relationships. The challenge may be health related or reflect a mental health issue.

We also face challenges as church—how has the church been changed by the pandemic? What do we need to let go and what do we need to return to—when the time comes? Our calling remains the same, but how we live it out may be different once the pandemic is behind us.

Howard Thurman wrote these words about our calling as followers of Jesus:

*When the song of the  
angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is  
gone,  
When the kings and the  
princes are home,  
When the shepherds are  
back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas  
begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among  
brothers,  
To make music in the heart.*

As 2021 evolves, our foundation and hope remain in God who comes close to each of us, providing the strength we need to face each day. Whatever 2021 holds, God continues to call us to the central task of loving our neighbours. May 2021 bring you surprises, joy, and connections.

Yours in Christ,

Martha and David

Thursday Evening Bible Study resumes on 14 January at 7.30 p.m. The focus will be Revelation. Join David and others on Zoom to explore this challenging book.

**Part of the United Reformed Church Cardiff & Penarth Pastorate**

# CHURCH NOTES

**H**appy New Year. New Year is a time to reflect on the previous year and growing up I was encouraged to make New Year resolutions. I can remember writing many lists, they have however become shorter over the years. 2020 was certainly not as expected and there is a lot to review. So will 2021 finally be the year to keep my resolutions?

December is usually a busy month in Church and last month was no exception.

The Church had approval from Synod to open the building again and we have held 2 'Light for our Loss' Services, a Sunday Morning Service and the Christmas Eve Midnight Communion Service. There has been a lot of work by many people to get to this point and it has been very much appreciated. I know people have been happy to be back in the building and are happy to hear the organ, despite not being allowed to sing. The doors have remained open to allow ventilation which has meant we have had to wrap up warmly too!

Regular Sunday worship continues with access as usual via mix-cloud, telephone or zoom. The young people in the pastorate helped prepare the Advent 4 Service. Christmas Eve saw Blessing the Crib on zoom, before the Rhiwbina Advent Stars Community Service and the Midnight Service was also live streamed on Beulah URC Facebook with the technology for it just set up earlier in the day.

Thank you to Jo Jones who made stars for the Juniors to decorate, decorated the gazebo with stars and the nativity and adorned the trees with knitting and reminders of the signs of Peace, Love, Hope and Joy. Also to our Pastoral Elders and helpers for distributing the lovely Pastorate Stars which were made by many in the Pastorate. The Christmas door decorations looked great, as did the lockdown recipe book and I have bookmarked a few recipes already. Please make sure you remember to read the Advent Booklet and listen to the Lessons and Carols on mix-cloud too. If you would like your own copy of this, CD's are available for a suggested £7 charitable donation.

In January the services in church have been paused and will be reviewed for February and the start of Lent. The Worship Group are due to meet on the 12th Jan- some people are able to help prepare services and others available to deliver them in church. If you would like to be involved please get in touch.

*Anne W*

## **Stewards/ Duty Elders/ Pulpit Readers**

As not all Elders/ Stewards/ Readers may be able to return to the church buildings at present, if you are able to attend and help with these duties please let me know.

Anne W

## **Mixcloud/ Zoom Services**

If you are able to record a reading or Intercessory Prayer for the weekly services please give your name to Helen White who will compile a list for Martha & David.

## **Church Secretary:**

Mrs Anne Wilkes

## **Church Treasurer:**

Mrs Barbara Rhys,

The Church Life Elder (CLE) meetings are open to both CLE and Pastoral Elders (PE) however it is not a requirement for PE to attend. The Church Meetings will be held after the morning service.

<b>CLE</b>	<b>Joint CLE and PE</b>	<b>Church Meeting</b>	<b>AGM</b>
Mon Feb 8th 7.30 pm Mon Mar 8th 7.30pm	Mon Jan 11th 7.30pm	Sun 28th Feb	
Mon May 10th 7.30pm			Mon Apr 12th 7.30pm
Mon Jul 12th 7.30pm Mon Sep 13th 7.30pm Mon Oct 11th 7.30pm Mon Nov 8th 7.30pm	Mon Jun 14th 7.30pm	Sun Jun 27th Sun Sep 26th Sun Nov 21st	
	Mon Dec 13th 7.30pm		

Anne

### Thank you

May we thank everyone, young or old, who worked so hard within Beulah and without to make this year's celebrations of Advent and Christmas so wonderful; being locked down and either alone or unable to be with our beloved families, this year has been very hard for everyone and zoom services especially have helped us to feel we are still part of a wonderful, active community of people.

*Viv and Harley*

### Thank you

Thank you to the Beulah Family, who donated chocolate goodies to the families in Cardiff, that needed your support at Christmas. And, in this year, your support was needed more than ever! As a team of front line workers, we greatly appreciated your generosity. Thank you so very much x.

*Staff from the Family Intervention and Support Services.*

### Christmas cards

I would like your cards this year again as I hope to be able to hold our coffee morning in aid of Marie Curie next October. If possible keep them for me until the Whitaker lounge is open again and it is safe for them to be left there. Or, drop them off at my house or contact me and I will collect. My details are in the church directory. ( I collect all cards not just Christmas).

Thank you and a Happy New Year

*Ruth Williams*

### Thankyou:

We would just like to offer a word of thanks at the end of this challenging year to all those who have worked so hard on our behalf to ensure that as many aspects as

possible of church life in the Pastorate have continued – many in new and unexpected ways! Particular thanks to Anne Wilkes, who took on the role of Church Secretary just before the pandemic

arrived, and has had to deal with so many new problems, as well as maintaining much of the 'normal' work that the role entails.

Louise & Huw x

### Ministers in the Pastorate:

Revd. Martha McInnes

Revd. David Dean

Email: [ministers@beulahurc.org.uk](mailto:ministers@beulahurc.org.uk)







## New Year, new challenge?



It's January. It's 2021. It's going to be a better year than 2020, isn't it? It can't not be, really. But, what can we **do** to make it better?

In 2020 cycling, which was already my favourite pass-time, became my lifeline. When we were all told we had to stay at home, the one ray of sunlight for me was the once daily exercise exemption. I couldn't cycle to work any more, but I could cycle **before** work. And I did. For about 100 days from late March I cycled every day, usually only for half an hour, but more at the weekend. My daily 'commute' to my desk in the study next to our kitchen took me up onto Caerphilly mountain dozens of times, round Roath Park lake, or across the Taff and round Radyr. Glorious sunrises, drizzly foggy days (yes there were a few of those too!), the point was being outside, being free, having a little me-time. Through the seasons riding conditions varied but the joy of riding almost daily was undiminished, sustaining me through challenging times.

Now, I'm not for a moment suggesting that riding so much is for everyone (my family think I'm just a **little** bit mad). But I believe cycling has a huge amount to offer many more people than currently ride regularly. So do a very special group of very dedicated people in Cardiff called Pedal Power. They are a charity based in Pontcanna Fields whose mission is simply to make cycling accessible to everyone. Regardless of age, experience, gender, physical or mental health or ability/disability.

If at this point you're thinking this isn't for me, please read on.

Perhaps your bike isn't in the best of health, or has been at the back of the shed for so long

you don't really know and would rather not look...

Pedal Power's mechanics can help - rejuvenating bikes either for their current or potential future owners is one of their specialities. They also refurbish donated bikes and sell them at modest prices.

Perhaps you feel you should try replacing some of those short car journeys with a bike ride, but you haven't ridden for a few - or more - years, and dealing with traffic is daunting...

Pedal Power have a team of trainers, who are experienced in restoring and building confidence in riders of all ages. They train adults and children who have never ridden, or who just need a refresher.

Perhaps you've been challenged by the news of the climate crisis to reduce your personal carbon footprint. But there are practical obstacles to leaving the car at home...

If any of this rings true for you, please get in touch. I'm hoping we might gather some brave souls together early in the new year to start on a new cycling journey. Lockdown restrictions will limit the services Pedal Power can offer in the short term, but they are very keen to spread their unique brand of encouragement widely as soon as it's possible. They really mean it when they say their mission is improving access to cycling for **all**.

Do have a look at their website <https://www.cardiffpedalpower.org> or at their Facebook page, and if you have any questions or would like to know more, please drop me an email .

## Zoom Church

What is Church? A building? God's House? A place to worship?

All of these things.... And yet

When the door is locked and we can no longer enter

What do we have?....



The congregation; the pastors; the music; the prayers; communion; heartfelt invitations; inclusion; time for reflection; breakout rooms; new faces from other churches/congregations; a united united family; support; connection; Happy Birthday celebrations; Penblwydd Hapus i ti!; collective prayers and last respects to our dearly departed; creativity – so much creativity.

An Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday. Homemade stars at Christmas and festive pyjamas being worn to Christmas morning worship.

Smiles and laughter as we all locate our microphones and enable our videos – disembodied voices – then cheers and congratulations. We are all learning.

A congregation counted in pages.....

Martha and David and all our Elders – Thank you. Thank you for being there

Thank you for keeping going, no matter the obstacles. For listening, and hearing, so many voices – you hear us: all.

Diolch.

Sunday mornings saved. A new routine – a new normal.

So much to celebrate, so much goodness and Goodness

And yet, and yet

Despite all of this,

Still so much to miss.

I will save the final Hurrah for our return

Even when we can finally unlock that Church door

We know it will not be as it was before

Who knows what changes the next chapter will bring:

No need for the hymnals; no option to sing

No chance for our song the rafters to raise

As voices combine in collective praise

No hugs, no handshakes, no friendly embraces -

Checking for the absence of familiar faces.

Yes, though we may have to worship 2m apart

Take comfort in knowing the Church at its heart

Needs no fancy adornment or fuss

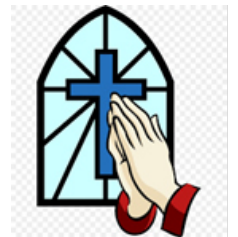
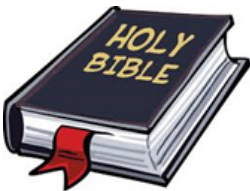
In essence: Our Lord ... and all of us.

So for now no need for a building, nor even a room

We have God, and each other

and we have Zoom.

Rachel Hazlewood



*We have received a Christmas letter from Brother Titus, a member of the monastic community on Caldey Island, who is known to many of us through his role as Guest Master at St Philomena's. We thought you might like to read his words of light and hope.*

### **Caldey Island, December 2020**

To all my dear friends, I only want to say this Christmas: lift up your head, look to the light. Turn away from darkness, gloominess and all negativity. For God's sake, bring light in this world! God is light, God is love. Bring the light of love and compassion in this world.

Share with me my gratefulness that I entered 50 years ago the monastic life. I went to the monastery in November 1970, just to think about my life and I didn't go home anymore. I entered the abbey of Echt in the Netherlands in November 1970 and went over the abbey of Achel in Belgium in October 1971, and I stayed there until I went to Caldey in September 2004.

Don't worry, you find your cross everywhere. Never run away. Persevere and carry your cross with joy. I am so grateful to my parents who gave me the solid foundation of love, trust and security. Grateful for their upbringing and sacrifices. Grateful to my family and friends.



Be always grateful my friends, it brings light in the darkness. Grateful for my community which is still going strong.....Our elderly and disabled brothers are the soul of our community. We take care for each other.

Hopefully we can welcome again in the new year, guests and visitors. In the meantime, we pray and think of each other. We are all one in the light and love of God.

Titus.



The United Reformed Church National Synod of Wales

### **Journeying together as Eco Church**

### **And God said "Take care of ....." "**

There will be a Zoom talk about caring for the land, with Rosie James of the Parks service of Cardiff Council, on Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> January (10:00 to 11:30 am). If you're interested, email ...

[Jason.askew.urcwailes@urc.org.uk](mailto:Jason.askew.urcwailes@urc.org.uk) to register and obtain the Zoom link.

Also, see the "flyer", page 9



*A poem, found by  
Roger Bidnell*

**The Christ Child**

Will the Christ Child be forgotten  
in the years that lie ahead?  
Or will we still remember  
That lowly manger bed?  
With our well advanced computers  
And our travel into space  
Will the Christ Child be remembered  
By the future human race?  
For none of us can know what the  
Future has in store,  
But what we know for certain is that  
God is at the core  
Of all that is created,  
Be it here or outer space.

His the hand at the beginning,  
His the omnipresent face,  
The present which He gives us in his love  
Through His own son;  
The love which never falters  
Whilst endless ages run,  
The circumstances we are in will  
Change from year to year;  
Our diet and our transport, and the clothing  
that we wear.  
But deep within the heart of each  
The need for love is there.  
God's love for us will never fail,  
It hasn't in the past -  
He is alpha and omega,  
The first as well as last.

*Valerie Grist*

**Dear Friends from Beulah,**

It has been over 12 years since I have moved back to France from lovely Cardiff, and a lot has changed for sure in everyone's life! The time we have spent in Cardiff with my family, playing, working and attending worship in Beulah have definitely been a golden period in my life. Fortunately, somethings have not changed: I am still in touch with Ian and Jenny whose friendship have stood the test of time! A few days ago, as we were exchanging stories and good wishes with Ian, I told him that I am currently helping my neighbour and friend Peter Murfitt with a recent project of his: Peter has written a book, which he hopes will be published soon, on the historical reliability of the Gospels. The title of

Peter's upcoming book is  
**"SOLID ROCK -  
Stress Testing the  
Gospels"**.

It deals with the manuscripts of the New Testament, the origins and coherence of the Gospels and how they correspond with what we learn from the historians and archaeology of the times. It even gives a scientific explanation for the star of Bethlehem.

To raise interest in the book, Peter has converted some of the chapters/ main themes into short episodes that are presented in a series of interviews. For those interested, you can consult the videos (four episodes are available to date) on these subjects on the YouTube Channel SOLID ROCK – Stress Testing the Gospel on

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDCbRAuZhQk7iS0dKaWBbiQ>

.\_Downloads of the video transcripts are available in English and French. Just click on the words "Show more" below the episode description of the video in YouTube.

Christmas is a time when light starts to overcome darkness and we celebrate the birth of Christ, the best present anyone could ever get! I wish all the good folk of Beulah peace, warmth and good health!

God Bless,

Merry Christmas and a  
Happy New Year,

*Máté Döbrössy*

# KIN at Christmas 2020

## Together we care and together we share

The KIN Committee would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who helped in our fundraising over Christmas. Despite the difficult circumstances, together we managed to raise much needed support for some vital causes and we are so grateful to you all.

### **ShelterBox ... £950 raised via:**

#### **Christmas Hampers:**

Thank you so much to Ann Grimes, Julie Jewell and Emma Cavanagh for making up hampers to be included in our Raffle.  
Congratulations to those who won a prize ...we hope you enjoyed it!

#### **Christmas Coffee Morning:**

Sincere thanks to the Cheer family and all the music group for devising, rehearsing and recording the musical items. We appreciate the thought and hard work that must have gone into it all. Thank you also for enabling the audience participation ... The Twelve Days of Christmas was a spectacular success!!

Thanks also to Father Christmas and Rudolph for their visits around the Pastorate, to those who joined us on Zoom on the morning and especially to all who gave so generously to the JustGiving page

### **Ty Hafan and Noah's Ark ... £284.50 was raised via**

#### **Christmas Swags:**

Many thanks to Karen and team for organizing and creating these lovely door hangings. A few of us, for the first time, learnt how to make them too!!!

If you still haven't paid perhaps you can drop the money to either Karen Holbrook or Eleri John.

**We will let you know about the next KIN meeting soon.**

*With thanks again and very best wishes to you all for 2021,  
from Eileen, Eleri and the KIN Committee*

***The next edition of Crossroads will be prepared by Colin, and anything for inclusion should be sent to him by Sunday, 24th January 2021***

### **EDITORS**

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**And God said “Take care of . . .”**

# **The Land**

Allowing our land and green spaces to reflect the abundance of God's creation through the protection and nourishing of plants and wildlife:

**Rosie James**

(Cardiff Council Parks Service)



Saturday 30th January

10.00am to 11:30am

email: [jason.askew.urcwales@urc.org.uk](mailto:jason.askew.urcwales@urc.org.uk)

to register and obtain the ZOOM link

**The United Reformed Church National Synod of Wales  
Journeying together as Eco Church**